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J O S H U A'S
RESOLUTION
TO
SERVE
G O D
WITH HIS
F A M I L Y.

Recommended to the Practice of the
Inhabitants of St. Sepulchres Parish.

From the

24th Chap. of *Joshua* 15th ver. Latter part.

— *As for me and my House, we will serve the
Lord.*



By WILLIAM BELL. D.D. Vicar there.

L O N D O N,

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be sold at the *Bible* in *St. Pauls Church-yard*, 1672.

RESOLUTION
BY THE
COUNCIL
OF THE
IMPRIMATUR.

Gulielm. VVigan Rev. in
Christo Patri & Dom. Dom.
Humfred. Episc. Lond. à/46.
Domest.

Novem. 23. 1671.

1805.79



TO
My beloved PARISHIONERS
OF
St. SEPULCHERS.

I Am willing to believe the judgement of some among you, that this Discourse lately preached to you, might be of good use, to advance domestic piety, if recommended from the Press to you: And have therefore gratified their importunities in the publication of it, and now send it to live in your eye, which might else have died in your ear. I have in this, as in all my other labours with you, endeavoured plainness of expression, that I might be serviceable to the meanest capacity, not despising the weak; you are my Family, and I would not feast, but feed you. God hath in his infinite mercy preserv'd many of your persons from the Plague, and your houses from the Flames, and built others out of the ashes of the late dreadfull fire, and amongst those his own house too: My aim in this Tract is to build up you and yours, as living Temples to him, that your persons and your

A 2 houses

Epistle Dedicatory.

houses might be, as objects of his mercy, so subjects of his praises that he might be glorified in you, and by you; that so you may not receive this, or any other grace of God in vain. To the promoting the Spiritual & Eternal welfare of your Families, I know no means more available, than the most useful, but most neglected duty of catechising: which I have frequently attempted to promote among you, though not with that fulness of success I desired: I have now a fitter opportunity than formerly, to add that work to my other labours on the Lords day with you; And I shall by God's assistance, begin it the next Spring, and continue therein, so long as you shall send your children and servants to receive the benefit of it. whom I shall endeavour to prepare for it on some afternoon, as shall be most convenient for them and you, in each week before the Lords daies. In the mean time I send you this following Discourse to affect your hearts towards so important a duty, beseeching you, in the bowels of our common Master, the Lord Jesus, and charging you as you will answer it at his Judgement-seat, to prepare and present your families accordingly, and (if God give life and health) they shall, as the most acceptable part of my employment among you, be cheerfully and constantly attended herein, by

Their and your Servant in the Gospel

From my Study
28. Nov. 1671.

William Bell.



JOSHUA'S
RESOLUTION
TO
SERVE GOD.

THE TEXT.

JOSHUA 24. VERSE 15.

The latter Part.

— But as for me, and my House, we will serve
the Lord.

Joshua, one of those two (*Caleb* the other) who
of six hundred thousand fighting men that
came out of *Egypt*, only entred into the
Land of *Canaan*, is now ready to pass by *Death*,
the way of all flesh, to that better Land of *Pro-
mise*, the Heavenly *Canaan*, whereof the other
was but a Type: And as all God's servants, whi-
ther they live, they live unto the Lord, or whither

Rom. 14. 8.

Joshua's Resolution

they die, they die unto the Lord, that whither they live, or die, they may be the Lord's. So he (whose life was a constant and successful warfare against the Adversaries of Israel; to the glory of the God of Israel) desires to combat the *last Enemy*, even *Death* its self, and in the socket of old age, to *burn and shine* to the same Glory; and that *not under a bushel, but on an hill, and in a candlestick, before men.* To which purpose in the *first verse of this Chapter of the Text*, as Supreme Magistrate, he summons a Parliament of *all the Tribes to Shechem*, the chief City of *Ephraim*, near his own habitation, where they *present themselves before God*, that is, *before the Ark*, purposely brought thither, the testimony of God's special presence. From the *second* to the *fourteenth verse*, Joshua gives them a compendious recapitulation, or short Narrative, of what God had done for them, and their Fore-fathers, that mercy might engage effectually to duty, since blessings are binders, and benefits chains, and mens offences are aggravated by gracious obligations. Thus *David* insinuates duty from mercy; and so doth *St. Steven*, and so *St. Paul*: And Joshua draws down the story from the *Rock out of which they were hewn, and Pit out of which they were dig'd*; their *Amorite-father, and Hittite-mother*. He leads them into, and out of the *Egyptian Furnace, as brands snatch'd out of the fire; and out of the water too, the Red Sea*, which became a grave to their Enemies, but a path to them: *He lead them thorough fire, and thorough water, and brought them out into a wealthy place*: And during

Psaln 78.
Ch. 7. and Ch.
13. of Acts.

3. & 4. verses
Context.

v. 5.
v. 6.

to serve God.

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during their *fourty years* abode in the *Wilderness*, they had *pluviam escatilem*, and *Petram aquatilem*, as *Tertullian* calls them; he thickned the Air into *Manna*, and dissolved the *Rock* into water for them, prepared them a *Table in the Wilderness*, and caus'd their *cup* to overflow. And the iniquity of the *Amorites* being now full, the *Axe* is laid to their root, and the *Sickle* to their clusters, they are cut down, rooted up, and *Israel*, the choice *Vine*, brought out of *Egypt*, is planted in their room. He turns the edge of *Balak's Sword*, and *Balaams Tongue*, that kired *Razor*, that was whetted against them, and converts the *Curse* into a *Blessing*: then the walls of *Jericho* fall before them, and the *seven Nations* void their Land to them, yet got they not the Land in possession by their own *Sword*, but his *Hornet*; neither did their own arm help them. It was not the breath of their *Rams Horns*, but the blast of his mouth, that levell'd the walls, and dismantled the City: And he (whose propriety the earth is, and the fulness thereof) gave them the *Jewels of the Egyptians* to adorn them, the *Lands* of the Nations to feed them, their *Cities* to shelter them, their *Vineyards* and *Olive-yards* to feast and refresh them. And now God had shewed them, by the mouth of *Joshua*, what was good; they had heard with their ears the Noble works that God did in their daies, and in the time before them: And now what doth the Lord require of them, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with their God. Cast away your *Idols*, sow not among thorns, cease to do evil, learn to do good: If the *Ark* come in,

v. 7.

v. 8.

v. 9. and 10.

v. 11.

v. 13.

v. 14.

Joshua's Resolution

Dagon must fall before it: No serving God and Mammon; no halting between God, and Baal: He will be altogether, or not at all your God; he loves a broken, but hates a cleft heart; the true Mother would not have the child divided: You desire he should love you in sincerity and truth, and he requires you should serve him so; it is most acceptable to him, for the father requires such to worship him: and it is most suitable to him, for he is a spirit, and must be worshipped in spirit, and in truth. But if it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, and it can but seem so, for his service is perfect freedom, then chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the Gods whom your Fathers served, that were on the other side of the Flood; or the Gods of the Amorites, in whose Land you dwell; and there is no great choice between them: Not that this was either Precept or Permission: (It was not in the power of any chief Magistrate, nor in the purpose of Joshua to grant them such an Indulgence) otherwise then as a probation of their loyalty to God, and to oblige them to a renuntiation of their Idolatry, and a recognition and acknowledgment of Gods Sovereignty, as they did, so to make a free-will offering, a voluntary tender of themselves to him, who loves the droppings, but hates the squeezings of the honey-comb; prefers the servant, not the slave, values only the chearful giver.

But however others warp from their duty, and (neglecting that God, the work of whose hands they are) serve Idols, the work of their own hands, yet will not I follow a multitude to do evil, but.

John 4. 23.

ver. 24.

Text.

21 Context.

but cleave to the God of my Fathers, never forsaking him, who hath never forsaken me; especially not now go from him, when by death I am going to him, but *die* as I have liv'd, *the Servant of the Lord*. And if my example cannot lead you, it shall one day judge you: If it cannot influence *the many thousands of Israel*, but that they will *starte aside as a broken bow*, yet will *Joshua's bow*, Gen. 49. 24. as that of *Joseph*, *abide in its strength*, and all the *arrows wherewith the Almighty hath fill'd his quiver*, Psal 127. 4. shall have no other scope or aim, but the glory of that God, that gave them: for *as for me and my house we will serve the Lord*.

The Words give you *Joshua's* firm resolution for duty; which duty is first laid down in the quality, 'tis *Service*; Secondly the object of the duty, or person to be served; it is *the Lord*: Thirdly, the subject or persons interested in the performance of this service, *Joshua*, and *his Family*, *I and my house*: Fourthly and lastly, the fixedness of his resolution to perform this duty, as not byass'd by the multitude, or greatness of dissenting Idolaters; in this discrete, or adverbative particule. *But; But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord*.

First the nature of the duty. it is *service*; *we will serve*. *If thou maist be free choose it rather*, 1 Cor. 7. 21. than service, saith *St. Paul*, but it is not so here; *he that is called being free, is the Lords servant, and he that is called being a servant is the Lords free-man*. Yet there is a subjection, that is the fruit of sin, and product of the *Curse*: thus *Cham* was the first servant we read of; *a servant of servants shall*

ver. 22.

Gen. 9. 25.

he be unto his Brethren. Of servants some were born in the house, the children of servants, which were reckoned among the Masters goods, thus *Solomon* had *servants born in his house*: Some were bought with money, so *Joseph* was a servant purchased by the *Ishmaelites*, and afterwards, of them, by *Potiphar*: Some were hired as the *Labourers in to the Vineyard*: Some were taken in war, run down by the spear, and sold under it; to this the Apostle alludes, when he saith, *Of whomsoever a man is taken captive to him he is in bondage*. Some are subject through poverty, thus, *the borrower is servant to the lender*: Others, through infirmity, thus *the ignorant is servant to the wife*, as the Apprentice lets out himself to learn an Art or Trade: which the *Hebrews* call a *Portion*. Secondly *Servants* are distinguished by the time of their servitude, the mercenary was usually for three years, the apprentice for six, yet *Jacob* served one and twenty; these differed from captives, in that they let out themselves, their time, and labour, thus *Ahab* sold himself to work wickedness, was a voluntier of Hell. *St. Paul* was sold under sin, sometimes captivated by sins of inadvertency and surprise. Those that sold themselves for a time, might lengthen the term to their deaths, by taking the *ear-mark* of perpetual servitude. But slaves born, bought or conquered, were by custom to serve all their dayes, unless redeemed.

Thirdly, *Servants* were distinguished by their Masters, Thus the slaves of *Herod* and *Cæsar* were called *Herodians* and *Cæsareans*, and thus our better service stiles us *Christians*. Slaves were look'd

look'd on as impersonal, not as men, but things; were called their Masters goods, had not estate, country, nor inheritance, *Ismael* must nor inherit with *Isaac*; nor *Jephthah* with the *Gileadites*. *Gen. 21. 10. Judg. 11. 2.* Morally God and Mammon have their servants *Know you not that he to whom you yield your selves Rom. 6. 16.* servants to obey; his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. Some are slaves to their purse, others to their pride, others to their paunch, for every sinner as well as the Drunkard, is not his own man; but wears the livery, does the drudgery, and earns the wages of his particular lust, *the wages of sin, which is death.* These are the choice of a depraved will; but Grace, with *Mary*, neglects the many impertinencies of the world, to *chuse the one thing necessary*, quits the shadow to embrace the substance, the shadow which it cannot hold, for the substance, which *shall never be taken away*; and such a choice doth wise *Ioshua* make, even of that God for his Master, who first chose him to be his *Servant*; But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord, which is the

Second general concern of the Text, the object of service, the Lord, and we call him Lord and Master; and we say well, for so he is: and master and servant are correlates, one supposeth the other, and if I am a Master, saith the Lord, where is my fear? Why in the heart of *Ioshua* he will serve the Lord with fear, but no slavish fear, perfect love casts out that, He trembles at his word, yet rejoiceth with trembling: he that fears his name, fights his battels and fears nothing but him, or if he fears sin,

Joshua's Resolution

for, 'tis for his sake, because it *seperates from him*, whom he desires to *serve*, because sure to enjoy him, and *him he will serve*

Only, no other Lord but he, *shall have dominion over him*. Others may sue, but he shall speed, the obedience return'd to him, whose right it is. Magistrates, Ministers, Parents, Masters, all serv'd but in subordination to him, *for Conscience sake, Conscience towards God*, since they are *the powers ordain'd by him*. Thus he only serv'd, though they are serv'd too; because they, for his sake, he for his own: Thus, if their commands controul not his word, but if they do then he and not they, *God and not man*; but of this we must be sure, for if we mistake, we *sin against Heaven, and against Earth*, and must have an Act of Indemnity from both, we are not sufficiently forgiven else; but where we cannot conscientiously act, we must submissively suffer: for, if *we resist, we receive to our selves damnation*. The Lord to be served then, and him only,

And him entirely, the whole man, a compleat burn'd Offering on his Altar, the inward, the outward man, *Body, Soul, and Spirit, all his workmanship, his purchase, created, and redeemed to good works*; and we are not sanctified without them, and all little enough, for so great a God; And as the whole man, so the whole Law, with respect to all his precepts, for all his precepts are just; just because his, whose will is both rule and reason of our obedience, and just in themselves too, though the ceremonial Precepts were comparatively *not good*, yet his moral Precepts were absolutely

to serve God.

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lutely good, *the Law holy, just, and good.* And *Joshua* labours to be good by them; a *Centurion* to the Lord of Hosts, he *bids go, and he goeth; come, and he cometh; do this, and he doth it; no hard saying, nothing that sendeth him away sorrowful; no grievous command, he disputes not with flesh and blood, the yoke easie and the burthen light, because his yoke, and his burthen.* It is but *speake Lord, and thy servant heareth, thy servant, that serves thee.*

Cheerfully too, *willing in the day of thy power, singing in the wayes of God, and running the wayes of thy Commandments, with an enlarged heart, and unshakled feet, counting duty my delight, not with eye service, as men pleasers, but in singleness of heart, as fearing thee.* A *Voluntier*, following God, as the *Israelites* did *Absalom*, in the *simpli-*
city of their hearts, assur'd it is he they follow,
 and then it matters not why, nor whither: and
serve the Lord

2 Sam. 15. 11.

Constantly too, even *all the dayes of my life,* not diverted by prosperity, nor affrighted by adversity. *Christ* must be followed to *Mount Calvary*, where he suffered (*let my Disciple take up his cross, and follow me*) as well as to *Mount Tabor*, where he was transfigured, or to *Mount Olivet*, whence he ascended. When *hunted on the Mountaines*, as well as when *crowned at Hebron.* In the *Wilderness*, and in *Canaan*, through the *Red Sea*, and the *River Jordan*, with *Moses*, and without, with *Manna*, and without. Thus *Joshua* did serve the Lord in his ordinances, the re-
 newing Circumcision, and the Passover at Gil-
 e
 gal,

Joshua's Resolution

gal, building an Altar at Mount *Ebal*, the Hil of *curſing*, a type of the curſe of crucifixion: and rehearſing the *bleſſings and curſings* there, and on Mount *Gerizim*. He ſerved God with his *faith*, in expecting the fall of the *Walls of Jericho*; and his *truth*, in curſing the *City*; his *punitive juſtice* in executing a *troubleſome Achan*. He ſerv'd God with his *patience* in waiting the time, and his *obedience* in uſing the means that he appointed for the conqueſt of *Ai*. His *fidelity* in keeping his *oath* with the *Gibeonites*; with his *courage* againſt *one and thirty Kings*, and their armies, he *went forth to Gods work*, and to his labour untill the evening, even for as long as he was pleaſed to arreſt the *Sun on Gibeon*, and the *Moon in the valley of Ajalon*. He ſerved the Lord with his *diſtributive juſtice* in apportioning the Land out to the ſeveral Tribes of *Israel*. *Whatſoever his hand found to do he did it with all his might*, reſting on God's arm to bear him up, and out. In life guided by his counſel, till at death he ſhould be received into his *Glory*. And though now ready to ſlay him, yet ſtill he *truſts in him*, reſolves to ſerve the Lord, as he had done, only, entirely, cheerfully, and conſtantly, with that piety, faith, juſtice, patience, obedience, righteouſneſſe, truth, and courage due to ſo great and gracious a God, from ſo impotent, and ſo obliged a creature, which brings to the

Third general of the Text, The ſubject of this duty, or perſons concerned in the Family of the Lord, as his ſervants. *Joshua*, and his domeſticks, *I and my Houſe*, or houſhold, or reaſonable part
of

to serve God.

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of his Family ; wherein you have observable, first the order, *I*, and then *they*, *I and my House*. Secondly the union, both *I*, and *they*, *We will serve the Lord*.

First the order, *I, and then they*. I before them, as an example to them, and men live by practice more than by precept. Then the commands of Superiours have authority in them, when they themselves become Presidents and Instances of them. Men will readily set their watches by the dial, when they are convinced the dial is truly set by the Sun. *The conversation of one righteous Lot*, will check a whole *City of Sodomites*. It is happy, when Masters and Parents can invite their Servants, and Children to be *followers of them*, because they are *followers of Christ* ; and by a good life, as the *Baptist*, prepare his way to them. What Israelite would exalt himself against God, when *David* laid his Crown at his foot-stool, and was ambitious to be a *Door keeper in his House* ? When he did nothing, but what pleased God, *whatever he did, pleased the People*. And what *Souldier* would not become *devout* under such a *Centurion* as *Joshua* ? therefore *I will serve the Lord before my House*, and,

I will serve *him* for them too, offering my daily Closet-sacrifices, *my Prayer as the morning incense*, and the *lifting up of my hands*, as the *evening Sacrifice*, tendered to God as *Job's daily Oblations* for the sins of his family : it is more then *It may be they have transgressed*, for *What man liveth and sinneth not ? In many things all offend*: His just suspicion therefore quickens him to ear-

Job. 1. 5

Joshua's Resolution

nest supplication. He *wrestles* with God, as *Moses* for a pardon, as *Jacob* for a blessing, and leaves him not till he hath prevailed for both, till God doth so forgive, and so give. Thus I *will serve the Lord* before, for, and

With my house too, which is the second considerable the union of devotion; *I and my house*; backing his precept with his practice; and uniting his Authority, and Example, and thereunto twilling his interest, that this *threefold cord*, might bind them to their duty. Not *I, or they*, but *I, and they*, and in copulatives one is not enough. The Master the head, the Wife the rib, and the Children the loins, and bowels, and the Servants the feet, the whole body of the family: And thus should every family be subject to its head, and the heads, and bodies of all families to him of whom the whole family in heaven, and Earth is named. And he who thus provides not for his family, is worse than an Infidel. *Jacob* after a tedious serving of *Laban*, argues the justice of contriving for his own household: *Joshua* actually plots the advantage of his in the best way, by the promoting of piety in the service of God. *Be thou diligent*, saith *Solomon*, to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. Doth God take care for Oxen? yes, the Cattle are his upon a thousand hills: The righteous God, as the Righteous man, is merciful to his beast, but more to man. There ought to be a reasonable care of unreasonable creatures, there must be a religious care of reasonable souls in Instruction, correction, reprehension, consolation, with all long-suffering, and doctrine: considering

First

Gen. 30. 30.

Prov. 27. 23.

First it answers the end of dominion. God's works and his gifts, are all *for himself*. Every *Prov. 15. 4.* workman designs his profit, his pleasure, or his praise; and our power must center in God's glory, 'tis from him, it must be for him: as the Author and end of all we have, and all we are. That so every Master of a family, may present his servants, as God's servants, and his children, as God's children: *Lo, I, and the children, which thou hast given me, and the fruit of the womb is his increase.* Thus *Jacob*, that came single, and naked, *with his staff over Jordan*, when by God's good providence, increased to *two bands*, cries out, *All that I have is thine*, and therefore purgeth his family of their *Idols*, before he goes to *Gen. 35. 20.* God, at *Bethel*: And *Gideon* begins his reformation *Judg. 6. 25.* on at his fathers house. And *David* would not suffer a deceitful person, or a lyer to abide under his roof in that *Psalms*, to wit, the hundred and first, *Psal 10 :* which Bishop *Ridley* had daily read in his family, and learn'd by heart. No Spiders should build in that timber, no Toads live upon that ground. And God gives a gracious testimony of *Abrahams* care to be Master of a well catechized family. *I know him*, saith God, *that he will command his children, and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgement*; and God blessed all his *planting and wa-* *Gen. 12. 13.* *traring with increase*, in a respectful wife of *Sarah*, an obedient Son of *Isaac*, and a faithful servant of *Eleazar*, and all the residue of his *three hundred and eighteen trained servants*. Bees bring their honey to the common Hive. No man is born,

much less born again, for himself only, but so the publique of his Country, and Gods Church, and for the publique-private of his family. *The lips of the righteous feed many.* Joseph fed his fathers families by their households. and the Saints in the New Testament had a Church in every House, without forsaking the publick assemblies.

secondly every Master and Parent must account to God for their servants and children. And therefore the Apostle on this score quickens inferiours to attention and obedience, *Obeys them,* saith he, *that have the rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account:* these words did terrifie that faithful and assiduous Preacher Saint *Crysostom*, as *Erasmus* calls him; as he stiles that parallel Scripture, *When I say unto the wicked thou shalt surely die, and thou warnest not the wicked from his evil way, to save his life: the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thy hand.* Not words, but thunderbolts. Should I be silent, I fear not only yours, but my own damnation, saith Saint *Bernard*. And this concerns not only us of the Ministry, but all in any authority, *he that is higher than the highest regardeth, and there are higher than they.* Job therefore pleads, and maintains his impartial integrity, *If,* saith he, *I did despise the cause of my Man-servant, or of my Maid-servant, when they contended with me. What then shall I do when God riseth up? and when he visiteth what shall I answer him?* He that is a good man, will be a good Master, and God will visit to enquire

quire who hath been so. And all have one father and Master in heaven. *Did not he that made me in the womb make him? And did not one hand fashion us both?* The servant paid the half-shekel, as his poll-money to God, and the Master paid no more, for *with God there is no respect of Persons.* We reckon with our children and servants here, and so will God with them and us, and with us for them hereafter, and Joshua well considered, that power was a talent, a stewardship, for which he must give an account, and was now hastning to it, And the prosecution of this duty

ver. 13.

Thirdly inhaunceth Gods glory, and secures our own. *In the multitude of subjects is the Kings* Prov 14. 28. *honour,* While we add to the Church, God looks on it, as an addition to his glory *When our light of instruction and example shines before others,* that they see and imitate our good works; hear, and obey our good words, then is God glorified, as our father, and Master in heaven, by being conspicuous in the lives of our families on earth, that Men may see, and say *God is in us,* and them of a truth. There is *Musick* at the return of a convert prodigal, at the finding of a lost sheep, and piece of silver, And then they that turn many unto righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever. They that are thus faithful in a few things, God will make them Rulers in a better City, in a larger family. They who have set up a Throne for God in the hearts, and lives of their domestick relations, shall sit down with God, and his Saints, in the Throne of his Glory. Well did Joshua resolve, therefore, whatever choice others should make,

Dan. 12. 3.

to *chuse the Lord as the portion* for him, and his:
But as for me, and my house we will serve the Lord.
 Which brings us to the

Fourth and last general of the Text, the fixed-
 ness of *Joshua's* resolution to adhere to God, and
 not to *bow his knee to Baal*, though he and his fami-
 ly should stand as a singular instance of sincerity,
 in the midst of an apostatizing people; laid down
 in this adversative particle *BUT*, *But as for me*
and my house, we will serve the Lord.

First *But I and they will do it*, though others do
 not: their faith and holiness, be they never so
 good, cannot save me, and therefore their impi-
 ety, and infidelity, be they never so eminent or
 numerous, shall not damn me. Let others think
 Religion but humane policy, a deity the creature
 of fear, and Scripture but State-shackles to awe
 men into civil peace and subjection, yet will not *I*
walk in the light of those foolish fires, these sinners
against their own souls have kindled, lest with
them I lie down in sorrow, but thy Word shall be a
light to the feet, and a lamp to the paths of me and
mine. And, as *Noah, Lot, and Moses, shined as lights*
in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, to
 condemn those Ages, which their preaching could
 not save. So would *Joshua, not partaking of the*
sins of others, lest he should partake of their plagues,
 But as *Peter to Christ, Though all should forsake*
thee yet will not I. Though I should die with thee,
yet will not I deny thee. He professeth his con-
 stant adherence to God, and (more than *Peter*)
 performs it too.

Secondly, *But I will do it*, and that because
 others

others do not, kindling from their coldness, as if I would, if possible, supererogate, do their duty, and my own. Thus *David*, *It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy Law: 119 Psal. 125. Therefore I love thy commandments above gold, yea above fine gold: therefore I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way.* I prize the way they persecute, value the Jewel they tread on. Thus Saint Paul exhorts *Timothy* to make a good use of bad examples: *The love of money, saith he, is the root of all evil, which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness. Fight the good fight of Faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. Let others spend their dayes in mirth, and in a moment go down to Hell. Let Israel sin, but let not Judah transgress. I dare not dally with God's Justice, play with his Thunder, be damn'd for company. This their way is their folly, and their posterity approve their saying. The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the Queen of heaven or the Moon; the whole Family interested, and combin'd in the Idolatry, to provoke the jealous God to jealousy: so be it, if so it must be: If it seem evil to you to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood; or the gods of the Amorites, in whose*

1 Tim. 5. 10.

11.

12.

Psal. 49. 13.

Jer. 7. 18.

whose Land ye dwell. But as for me and my house we will serve the Lord.

Application. And now all *this that is written, is written for our instruction, upon whom the end of the world is come*, who live to see all our Religion burn'd up by the flames of ignorant zeal, or drown'd by an inundation of gross prophaneſs, But how few *Joshua's* are there among us, who use their power to promote piety? or interpret their commission of Masterſhip in a family, as a Stewardſhip, and trust from God, for the advancing of his Glory? We behave our selves not as factors, but proprietors of our power; we forget, that God lends us our children, and servants, that we may *reſtore him his own with usury*. But by our servants and our selves we trade for our children, and while we carefully plot to graſp a good handful of the world for them, we teach them not by example, or precept to *lay hold on eternal life*: As if God were bound to invert his promises. and to *give Heaven*, where we earnestly *ſeek Earth*. Should the Lord viſit (as indeed he doth) as *AAs 20. 20.* Saint Paul did, *from house to house*, and make in-
Ezek 34 3, 4. quiriſition how his *Flock* hath been fed, *the diſeaſed ſtrengthened, the ſick healed, the broken bound up, the ſtraggler brought back, the loſt ſought*, would he not find a *ſooleiſt Shepherd* almoſt in every family? *ſi ventri bene, ſi lateri*, If *proviſion* be but *made for the fleſh*; for the belly, and for the back, *having food, and raiment*, for them and theirs, too many are moſt unchriſtianly content: while every one looks to his own way: and every one ſeeks for gain from his quarter: taking gain for godlineſs, Where-

as we are taught and assured that *godliness alone* Tim. 6. 5, 6.
is great gain. The wicked in the fulness of his
sufficiency is in straits : But the Righteous in Job. 20. 22.
the midst of their straits are in al-sufficiency. *I*
have enough my Brother, said *Esau* to *Jacob*; but Gen. 33. 9.
pretendedly, for he takes from *Jacob*. *I have e-*
nough, said *Jacob* to *Esau*; and that truly, for he 11.
takes nothing from *Esau*. For God's enough is e- 15.
ver the Good man's enough, what pleaseth God,
pleaseth both, whether of the life or wealth of the
World. *St. Paul hath nothing,* and yet he *possesseth* 2 Cor 5. 10.
all things. He hath all things, who enjoyes God,
the mine, the spring of all. O learn then this
Christian craft, to value the jewel above the case,
the Soul above the body, to *seek the Kingdome of*
God, and its Righteousness, to esteem the fountain
above the cistern, the upper springs beyond the nea-
ther, the blessings of Gods right hand above those of
the left. *What would it profit you, if you should gain*
the whole world, and lose your own soul? The loss of
the soul, is an incomparable, an irreparable loss,
nothing equal, nothing in exchange, *what can a*
man give in exchange for his soul? But the grand
reason why we expose our selves and families to
these hazards of damnation, is our gross igno-
rance, and (which is the consequence of that ig-
norance) our slight esteem of our Lord and Ma-
ster; to avoid both, study God and the advan-
tages of his service, as

First, It is an *honourable service*, in the Master
we serve, It is God. Kings are his creatures, whose
both daies, and dominions are determined; but
Gods sovereignty is universal and eternal. Princes

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cannot if they would, or will not if they can, gratifie all that serve them, but God gives earth in possession *the Saints, the Meek, shall inherit the earth*: and Heaven in reversion to all his servants, *He that ordereth his conversation aright, shall there see the salvation of the Lord*. Crowns, and thrones are the highest glory revealed here below, yet are *not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed*. It is honour to serve our betters, it is the highest honour to serve the best, and *such honour have all Gods Saints, all sit in the Throne*. And

Our service is honourable in our fellow-servants, *Christ the chief, he took on him the form of a servant, came not to be ministred unto, but to minister. Lo, I come to do thy will O my God. We are then fellow-labourers, together with God. He who took upon him the form of a servant, thought it no robbery to be equal with God. He who washed his Disciples feet, was yet their Lord and Master. And as Christ, so the Spirit of Christ, our fellow-servant, helps our infirmities, prescribes our formes, and enflames our hearts in prayer, the fire and the incense both from him; he makes those duties feizable, which Christ makes acceptable. And the Angels our fellow-servants; Gods Messengers; nay our servants, ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation; they support our bodies, that we dash not our foot against a Stone, and they transport our soules, as that of Lazarus into the bosome of Abraham; our life-guard in this world, and our bearers to a better. Alexander would not wrestle in the Olympick games, because there was no King, no Equal to contend with him; here,*

as *Jacob*, we wrestle with *God*, have glorious attendants, royal assistants, and what makes the service, yet further *honourable*

It is a labouring for the benefit of souls. Employments, usually take their value from their object. The Divine is therefore preferr'd before the Physician, because the soul is more worth than the body; and the Physician before the Lawyer, because the body is more valuable than the estate. *All that a man hath* he cannot give for his *Soul*, *it is not redeemed with corruptible things*, yet *all that a man hath he will give for his life*. The *Woman* with her bloody issue spent all she had upon Physicians, to purchase her cure. Your design and end in the pious education of your children and servants, is to preserve their immortal Soules from the eternal death of Hell; a work that the King of Glory the Lord *Christ*, thought worthy of his heart blood, and precious life.

Secendly, Your service is easie, *the yoke* not hard, the *burden* not heavy, compar'd with those of the world, and though it be down hill, men take pains to go to hell. It is difficult, if not impossible to *serve two Masters*, yet the sinner is slave to many, distracted by wild horses, and yet survives in the pieces; whom one compares to the chamberlain in an Inn, at the same time call'd for by the several Guests. Lust and Sloth summon to the bed, and Gluttony to the table, Drunkenness to the cellar, Anger to the fire, and Pride to the window, Ambition calls up, and Covetousness bids come down: so that the sinner seems to be, not as *Mary Magdalen*, the habitation of *Seven Devils*, but of a *Legion*, while sin, like the *Camelion*, makes us take the co-

lour, and livery of every temptation, that is near us. Whereas Piety invites us to the service of but *one Lord*, whose commands are no more a burden, than wings are to a bird, by which we soar aloft with ease and pleasure. It plants that love of God in our hearts, that *fulfills the whole Law*, as it disposeth to all obedience, there is an harvest of duty in the seed of love, as all the Autumn crop lies virtually in the Husband-man's seed-corn. *I delight to do thy will, O my God, saith David, yea thy law is within my heart.*

Luke 17. 10.

Thirdly, Our service of God, is just, and right, our bounden duty, *when we have done all, we have done but our duty*, what we owe to God, our selves, and others. We are God's *servants* by all the means of servitude, born within his Church, bought with his blood, hired by his mercies, taking the earnest of his Sacraments, overcome by his grace, and apprentices to his Law. One God hath created us, one Christ redeem'd us, one Spirit sanctified us, and therefore all this, that we might serve him, that we might *remember our Creator in the days of our youth*, that we might *serve our redeemer without fear*, that we might not *tempt, grieve, quench, resist, and do despite to that holy Spirit of grace, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.* When the Israelites were brought out of Egyptian bondage, that type of Hell, Moses enjoynes them a *service to keep*. As we *serve not God*, so neither doth God bless us *for nought*. He who engageth us to serve him, engageth himself to reward us, and

Exod. 12. 25

Jo. 22. 2.

Fourthly Therefore his service is profitable though not to him, yet to us. *Can a man be profitable to God, as he that is wise may be profitable to himselfe,*

self? the servant is a child, the vailes grace, and the wages glory. *Wages*, not as we, but *Christ* earned it, and God promised it, these make it a debt, which else is gift, the gift of God is eternal life. Here our Master is ever with us, *Lo I am with you alwaies to the end of the world.* Mat. 28 20. Hereafter we shall be ever with him. *Father, I will, that they, whom thou hast given me, be with me, where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me.* Job. 17. 24. God makes here an hedge about his servants, by his providence, and hereafter reserves an heaven for them in his presence; they walk under a double guard, the power of God without them, and the peace of God within them; and he, who is their shield is their exceeding great reward too. If servants friends, and if friends sons, and if sons heirs, coheirs with Christ, and that of a Kingdome, and that Kingdom eternal in the Heavens, the last, everlasting advantage of the honourable, easie, just, and profitable service of God.

Let all this then prevail with you to serve the Lord, and that

First in your own persons; Christ is the Door, that lets you into his family; *no man comes to the father, to the Master but by him.* His blood is your livery, his Law your employment, and his crown your wages. *Walk as you have him for an example, walk as examples* your selves to the families over which the Holy Ghost hath made you Overseers, and which Christ hath purchased with his blood. Every soul being to him, an *Acel. ma*, nor bought with silver and gold, but with his dearest blood. Tread not his blood under foot, by a neglect of souls. But (as you take care your own title to your estates

2 Tim. 1. 5.

states may be good, that you may entail, not a Law-suit, but a livelie-hood on your posterity, so) secure your own right to God by knowledge of him, faith in him, love for him, and obedience to him. Hereditary piety makes way for Gods blessing in the families imitation of it. *When I remember,* saith Saint Paul, *to Timothy his Son in the Gospel; the unfeigned faith that is in thee, that dwell'd first in thy Grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am perswaded, that in thee also. Gods love thus continued to the third and fourth generation, transmits the title to thousands after: whereas David lives to see his murder and adultery punish'd in two of his children, sinning according to the similitude of their fathers transgressions: And the sword which he brought into the house of Uriah, never departed from his own house, but began to devour in Ammons falling by the hand of Absalom, and Absalom by the darts of Joab, and Adonijah by the justice of Solomon. Thus parents like pieces of shipwrack'd vessels, by their own ruines, serve to caution their posterity to avoid those rocks, shelves, and quick-sands, on which themselves have bulg'd, or been stranded. The Lacedemonians finding two brethren contending, punished the parents, whom they found negligent in not better instructing them. Know the will of God your selves and do it. least you become blind leaders of the blind, to the utter ruine of you and yours. And let your light of knowledge, so shine in practice before them, that finding Christ, Moses, and Elias: Gospel, Law, and Prophets, Gods word in your lives as well as your houses; they may say with Saint Peter, It is good to be here, and desire to set up their Tabernacle with you.*

Second-

Secondly serve God with them, First in dayly Prayers, and Praises among them. Call to them Morning and Evening, and say, *Come, and let us fall down & kneel before the Lord our Maker.* Blessing him for the protection of the night past, and imploring the continuance of it for the day to come. And then thanking him for the mercies of the day past, and beseeching him to watch over you for the ensuing night, that you *sleep not the sleep of Death.*

And on this Duty let every one attend; *draw near* sayth the Church *and we will run after thee,* a single prayer knocks at the Gate of heaven, but united Devotion stormes it. God hath said he will not, and therefore we may say he cannot deny his presence, *where two or three are met in his Name,* he should deny himself if he should renounce his promise; *but he is faithfull and cannot deny himself.* Serve the Lord together then, Parents and Children, Masters, Mistresses, and Servants, considering you have all one Master, one Father in Heaven, you are taught to say *Our Father.*

Secondly serve God toward them, by instruction, and Catechizing, *teach them in the trade of their way* Prov. 22. 6. *and when they are old they shall not depart from it.* *Bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the* Ephes. 6. 4. *Lord.* If you only nourish the bodies of your relations, birds and beasts are as kind. Labour to mend by good Education, what you have mar'd by propagation, you have begotten and borne Sinners, assist to the better birth of your Children by *begetting them to Christ,* by travelling *with them till Christ be formed in them,* by faith, and obedience. There is the Doctrine of Baptismes, Heb. 6. 2.

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by which the chatechiz'd were prepared for the Sacrament of baptism antiently, by which the baptiz'd are to be prepared for the Sacrament of the Lords Supper Now. *Timothy* was instructed from *his infancy*, and *Sammel* dedicated to the Lord as soon as weaned. Oh! consider how early your Children are old enough to Sin, to dy, to be damned, and have a care how you say it is yet too soone to learn righteousness; the Scripture hath food fit for them, *milk for Babes*, as well as *strong meat* for grown Christians. And the same Scripture that provides for them, sends out kind invitations to them, *suffer little Children to come unto me, and forbid them not*. And how should they rash to Christ, but by *Water, and the Word, Baptism, and Teaching*, therefore put together by our Saviour. *Mat. 23. 19, 20.* And let it be *in the Trade, or secundum os vie sue, according to the mouth* of their way, a metaphor taken from narrow mouth'd glasses, that are fill'd, not by powring buckets of water upon them, but by dropping it into them, *driving these Lambes, as they are able to bear*, not tyred by the dulness of their apprehensions, but being patient with them, as God is with you, to whom he *stretches out his hand still*, though to a *gain saying People*; the Rock is followed by, not the violent, but frequent falling of the water upon it.

Thirdly bring your Children and Servants to the publique Assemblies, to *serve God in the great Congregation*. *David* was glad when they said, *come let us go together into the House of the Lord*. Let not your particular callings obstruct this chief one, which may consist with, and must bless the other: But consider the time of you and yours is principally

pally due to God, who yet asks but a part, and that a small one. Should he have *required more of you*, he had but ask'd his due, and might have *done what he would with his own*. Oh! that the Governors in each house had that *zeal for Gods house*, that *David* had, so to *devour them*, to swallow them up, that they would be content to be as the *Door-keeper* there, who was first in, and last out; that they would come *early to seek God* there, with their families. *Cesar's* word to his Souldiers in every exploit was, *not go ye, but let us go*. The *Pharisees* would lay on *Loads of duty*, but on *others shoulders*, not their own. 2 Kings 19. 3.
Mat. 23. 4.

Fourthly, use your authority to suppress sin, and encourage holiness in them. Cast out ill nature by the *rod*, before it grow too strong for the *Scorpion*. A just and wise severity herein is the best mercy you can shew them. God required *Salt* in the sa- Lev. 2. 13. crifices of the Law, but *no honey*. And still prefers *open rebuke to secret love*. And his own practice Prov. 3. 12. is to *correct whom he loves*. And *St. Augustine's* saying was, he could not truly affect that man, whom he would not venture to displease, by a seasonable and sharp, yet charitable reproof. God *hedgeth* in his Churches *way with thorns*, (that is afflictions) as pungent remembrances of duty, *that she may not turn to the right hand or to the left*. Sin is a Lethargy, they must be rowed out of it, whom you intend to heal.

And let both Master and Servants, Husband and Wife, Parent and Child, *adorn the Gospel and glorifie God*. And *herein*, saith Christ, *is my father glorified, that you bear much fruit*. Which glorifying God, is more acceptably done by one gracious

Gen. 28. 17.

Heb. 11. 14.

Mat. 5. 8.

Mat. 5. 21.

action of a Christian, than by the whole work of the Creation, How much more by a *life full of good Works*, and that in a *whole household of Faith*. who will not say of such a family, as *Jacob*, of *Bethel*, certainly *this is no other, but the house of God, and this is the Gate of Heaven?* For holiness is heaven below, and happiness is heaven above; and the way to happiness is by *holiness without which no man shall see the Lord* : No seeing that God with comfort, whom we never served. *But blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God*, and God is the Chief good, and blessedness is the enjoyment of the chief good. Let the Lord find a religious, loyal, righteous charitable *Noah, Abraham, Lot, Joshua*, and their families, under every roof in this Parish and City : Every one *converted and strengthening their brethren*, children, servants, relations, that God may *reap plentifully*, where he hath *sowed plentifully*. So shall you bring in a large harvest of glory to God, and at last receive a full crop of glory from him; when you shall be entertain'd with that comfortable call and commendation, *Well done good and faithful servants, you have been faithful in a few things, I will make you Rulers over many things, enter into the joy of your Lord*. To which one Lord, and three Persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be blessing, honour, glory, and praise, here, and every where, henceforth, and for evermore, *Amen, Amen*.